liable to pay the Property Tax from the date of possession thereof. Tn regard to the tax liability for the period between the Asian Gaines aad the date of handing over of possession, a decision 's yet to be taken.

Abolition of contract labour in FCI

855. SHRI SURAI PRASAD; ,
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:
Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number 'of contract la bour employed in the storage depots and other departments of Food Corporation of ^Indiai

(b) whether their is any proposal under Government's consideration to abolish the contract labour system in Food Corpora tion of IndiaJand;

(c) ff so, what steps are being taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE ' MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): w(a) The foodgrain handling operations in FCI depots vary from season to season and even day to day. Generally these are carried out through service contractus who employ thei$_r$ own labour as per the requirement and periodical work indent. Therefore the $_n$umber of labourers keep on varying from time'to time.

(b) and (c) The question of abolition of contract labour system in food storage depot?, of the FCI is under consideration of the Union Ministry of Labour On the directives of the Supreme Court in a writ Petition filed by the FCI Workers Union.

Tailing over of possession' of foodgrafas front Punjab by FCI

856. *SHRI* PAWAN KUMAR BAN-SAL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased. *o state:

(a) what >s the normal period during which the FCI takes over the possession of foodgrains^ purchased on its behalf by the Slate- organisations in Punjab markets;

(b). whether it is... a. fact that any delay in this process beyond three-four days cause many problems, disputes and wastages; and

(c) if so, what -steps have beentakenI to ensure quick transfer of stocksandspeedy movement of food grains from. Punjab?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE* MINISTRY OF FOOD AND,, CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) to (c). The takeover of food-grains by the Food Corporation of India from the State agencies in Punjab is a continuous process and the quantities taken over depend upon the volume of stocks,, available "storage, movement capacity and other. related factors. The State agen-cies are expected to* procure grains that conform to specifications and maintain them in. good condition. They are reimbursed all reasonable expenses on sto rage ^and'maintenance for «the period the grains procured are held by them. It is the endeavour of the' Food Corporation of India to take over such stocks as expeditiously as possible. The movement of foodgfains from Punjalj, wbiclf "was 9. 15 lakh tonnes in December, 1986, went up to over 12. 00 lakh tonnes in March, 1987. .

Drought relief to Kerala

S57. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI N. E. BALARAM:

Wilt the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:. '

(a) whether Government are aware of the acute drought situation. in Kerala;

<b) whether the Kerala.. State Govern-. meat has submitted any memorandum to the Central Government seeking for an immediate drought relief assistance of Is. -" 138- crores;, and

. (c) if so, the details thereof and Gov-ernment's reaction tberto?